

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully studied the outstanding Official Action. The present amendment is intended to be fully responsive to all points of rejection and is believed to place the application in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application are hereby respectfully requested.

Claims 67-114 are pending in the present application.

Claims 67, 70-73, 76-79, 83-85, 94, 95, 101-106, 108-112, and 114 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Vacherand et al. (US 6,929,204).

Claims 68, 69, 74, 75, 80-82, 85-93, and 107-113 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 96-100 are allowed. Applicants thank Examiner for his indication of the allowability of the claims as indicated above.

In addition to claim amendments discussed below, the present amendment cancels claims 68, 94, 95, 101, 102, 107, and 113 without prejudice. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the cancelled claims, as well as claims amended in the present amendment in their forms before the present amendment, in the context of a continuing application.

Thus, claims 67, 69-93, 96-100, 103-106, 108-112, and 114 are pending in the present application after the present amendment.

Claim 67 has been amended to include of the limitations of dependent claim 68 and is therefore deemed allowable.

Claim 68 has been cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 69-93, which depend directly or indirectly from amended claim 67 and recite additional patentable subject matter are therefore deemed allowable.

Claims 94 and 95 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 96-100 are allowed.

Claims 101 and 102 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Claim 103 has been amended to include of the limitations of dependent claim 107 and is therefore deemed allowable.

Claims 104-106, which depend directly or indirectly from amended claim 103 and recite additional patentable subject matter are therefore deemed allowable.

Claim 107 has been cancelled without prejudice.

Claim 108, which depends directly from amended claim 103 and recites additional patentable subject matter is therefore deemed allowable.

Claim 109 has been amended to include of the limitations of dependent claim 113 and is therefore deemed allowable.

Claims 110-112, which depend directly or indirectly from amended claim 109 and recite additional patentable subject matter are therefore deemed allowable.

Claim 113 has been cancelled without prejudice.

Claim 114, which depends directly from amended claim 109 and recites additional patentable subject matter is therefore deemed allowable.

Applicants find that the present invention as claimed is neither described nor suggested in the prior art of record, taken either individually or in combination.

While Applicants do not necessarily agree with the Examiner's position regarding the rejection of the claims as indicated above, for the sake of expediency the claims have been amended to overcome the rejections. Applicants once again thank Examiner for his indication of the allowability of the claims as indicated above. It is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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